DEFENSE LANGUAGE TRANSFORMATION

12 October 2005

Overview

- **Background**
- **Defense Language Transformation Goals**
- **Current State and Desired Outcomes**
- **2005 SAIC Study – “Language and Regional Expertise in Officer Development”**
- **Recent Interest Items**
- **Questions/Discussion**

Background

- **Post 9/11 military operations reinforced the reality that DOD needs significantly improved organic capability in emerging languages and dialects**

- **DEPSECDEF published the “Defense Language Transformation Roadmap” in February 2005 which developed aims to meet these needs**

Defense Language Transformation Goals

- **Goal 1:** Create foundational and regional expertise in officer, civilian and enlisted ranks for both Active and Reserve Components
- **Goal 2:** Create capacity to surge language and cultural resources beyond these foundational and in-house capabilities
- **Goal 3:** Establish cadre of language professionals possessing Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) proficiency of 3/3/3 in reading/listening/speaking. Address language requirements below 3/3/3 ability
- **Goal 4:** Establish a process to track accession, separation & promotion rates of military personnel with language skills & Foreign Area Officers

Current State and Desired Outcomes*

Goal 1 - Create foundational language and regional ex

Current Situation

- Language and regional expertise have not been regarded as warfighting skills, and are therefore not incorporated into operational or contingency planning
- As a result, there is insufficient effort under the current “requirements” determination process to prepare for support of deployed forces
- Language talent that may be resident in the force (active and reserve components, and civilian) is unknown and untapped
- Language and cultural expertise are not valued as Defense core competencies

Desired Outcomes

- Department has personnel with language skills capable of responding as needed for peacetime and wartime operations with the correct levels of proficiency
- Total Force understands and values the tactical, operational and strategic asset inherent in regional expertise and language
- Regional area education is incorporated into Professional Military Education and Development

*From the Defense Language Transformation Roadmap

Defense Language Transformation Roadmap

Goal 1 - Create foundational language and regional c

- Task 1.P. Ensure incorporation of regional area content in language training, professional military education and development, and pre-deployment training (Full Operating Capability Date: March 2006)

29 March 2005
SAIC Study – "Language and Regional Expertise in Officer Development"

Congressional Tasking

(Excerpt from House Report 4200)

"The committee notes that recent operational requirements with Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom, as well as the global war on terrorism, place more emphasis on the need for foreign language and regional expertise among military personnel. The committee is concerned that the education and training provided to officers both before commissioning and throughout their careers may not adequately prepare military leaders* with the skills needed for these and similar future operations. The committee is also interested in the degree to which officers with regional expertise and language ability are promoted and utilized within the force. The committee directs the Secretary of Defense to conduct a study of these matters, including:

- **Current practices for education and training in language and regional studies**
- **Number who are so trained**
- **Types of languages and areas studied**
- **Comparative promotion rates**

The study should also provide recommendations for the enhancement of language and regional studies within the officer population."

* Emphasis added

Study Task

- Conduct a study to determine the degree to which officers are provided education and training in foreign language and regional expertise, including a review of how such learning is sustained and developed over an officer’s career

Relevant Findings

- Non-resident/distance training methods are primary venues for officer PME (virtually all RC and a majority of AC officers)
- Currently very little consideration of integration of foreign language into any officer PME programs
- Broad disagreement within Services with both need for/value of officer language skills and ability to incorporate language training into PME, but general recognition of its value to greater numbers of enlisted personnel
- Broad agreement within Services that initial language training of durable value is beyond time available to junior officers after commissioning under current career assignment, training and education milestones
- Broad recognition of value of cultural awareness at all grade levels and ability to expand it through PME
- Officers currently receive no structured exposure to regional/cultural studies as part of core curricula at military schools before intermediate PME
- Highest quality regional studies are conducted at senior (PME II) institutions, including trips to regions studied; however, this permits little opportunity to exploit these skills for more than one or two post-school assignments

Relevant Findings (cont)

- No common framework within Services for cultural understanding across all officer education systems, i.e., how to approach challenges of operating in a different culture
- Courses at several PME schools provide regional/cultural familiarization, often on an elective basis and focused on current operational issues (Islamic radicalism), not future challenges
- No consideration of vertical or horizontal integration of regional/cultural studies courses within and across Service and joint PME institutions
- Currently little consideration of utilizing international/allied officers attending US PME courses to enhance US officer language skills. Some modest use of foreign officers to augment regional/cultural studies

Recent Interest Items

- **Officer Language Expertise Goals**
- **Foreign Language Proficiency Pay**
- **Identifying Requirements**
- **QDR**
- **Foreign Area Officer Programs**
- **Strategic Language List**

Questions/Discussion